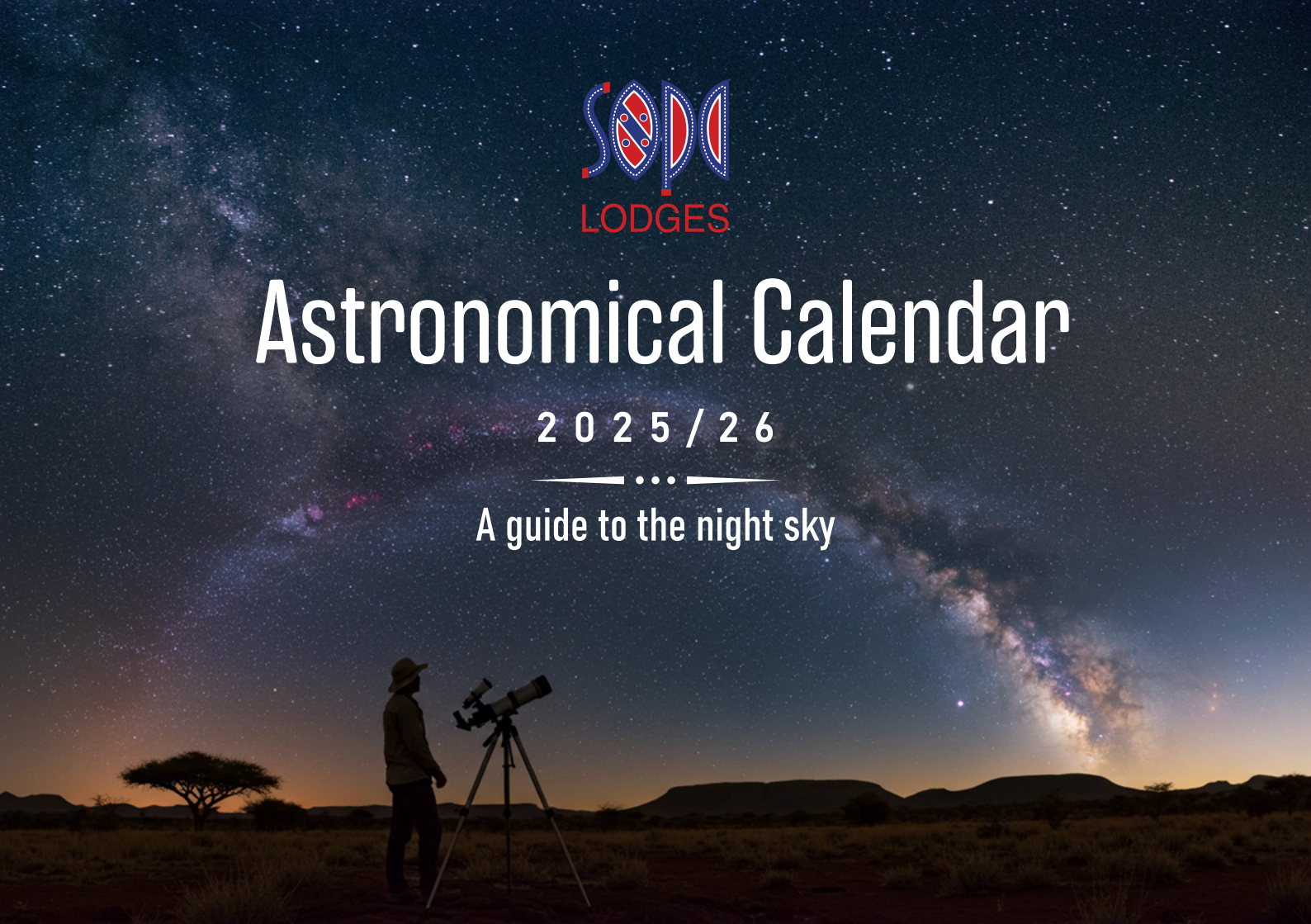


Astronomical Calendar

2025/26

A guide to the night sky

July

2025

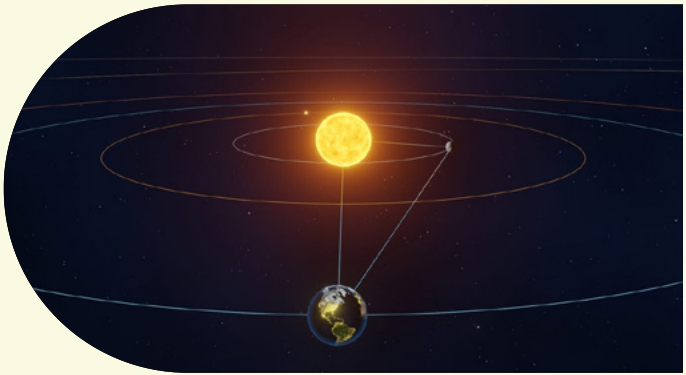
July 4th

Mercury at Greatest Eastern Elongation

Mercury reaches the greatest eastern elongation, which is its furthest point from the Sun.

Time: Just after sunset (approximately from 19:00 - 19:30 EAT).

Visibility: The planet will be visible low in the western sky.



July 10th

Full Moon

The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun , and its face will be fully illuminated.

Early native American tribes knew this full moon as the Buck Moon because the male buck deer would begin to grow their new antlers at this time of year. This moon has also been known as the Thunder Moon and the Hay Moon.

Time: This phase occurrs at 23:38 EAT.

July 28th

Moon Near Mars, Lunar Occultation Of Mars

The 16% illuminated Moon will be close to Mars on the border of the constellation Leo and the constellation Virgo.

Time: From 20:00 EAT.

July 28th - 29th

Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower

The Delta Aquarids is an average shower that can produce up to 20 meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by debris left behind by comets Marsden and Kracht. It peaks this year on the night of July 28th and the morning of July 29th. The crescent moon (42% illuminated) will set early in the evening and will not interfere with observations.

Time: The best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. The radiant rises in mid-evening and reaches its highest point around 02:00 EAT. This is the best time to view the meteors.

Visibility: Meteors will radiate from the constellation Aquarius but can appear anywhere in the sky.

August

2025

August 11th

The Planetary Alignment

6 planets – Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Uranus, Neptune, and Saturn will align in the morning sky. Four of these planets (Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn) will be visible to the naked eye. You will need a telescope or high-powered binoculars to see Neptune and Uranus.

Time : Just before sunrise (approximately (05:00-05:30) EAT).

Visibility : Mercury, Venus and Jupiter will be visible towards the east. Saturn will be visible towards the west, together with the Moon.

August 12th

Moon Near Saturn

The 88% illuminated Moon will be close to Saturn.

Time: Observe them with the naked eye or through a pair of binoculars in the constellation Pisces from 20:30 EAT.

August 12th - 13th

Perseids Meteor Shower

The Perseids are one of the best meteor showers to observe, producing up to 60 meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by comet SwiftTuttle, which was discovered in 1862. The Perseids are famous for producing a large number of bright meteors.

Time : Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. The waning gibbous moon will block out all, but the brightest meteors this year.

Visibility : Meteors will radiate from the constellation Perseus, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

August 23rd

New Moon

The whole night will be moon free.

September

2025

September 7th

Total Lunar Eclipse (Blood Moon)

A total lunar eclipse occurs when the Moon passes completely through the Earth's dark shadow, or umbra. During this type of eclipse, the Moon will gradually get darker and then take on a rusty or blood-red color. The eclipse will be visible in Africa, Asia and Australia.

Time : Visible from 20:30 to 22:00. EAT.

Visibility : The Blood Moon will be visible towards the east.

September 8th

Moon Near Saturn

The 98% illuminated Moon will be close to Saturn. Observe them with the naked eye or through a pair of binoculars in the constellation Pisces.

Time : Visible from 20:00 EAT onwards.

Visibility : The phenomenon will be visible towards the east.

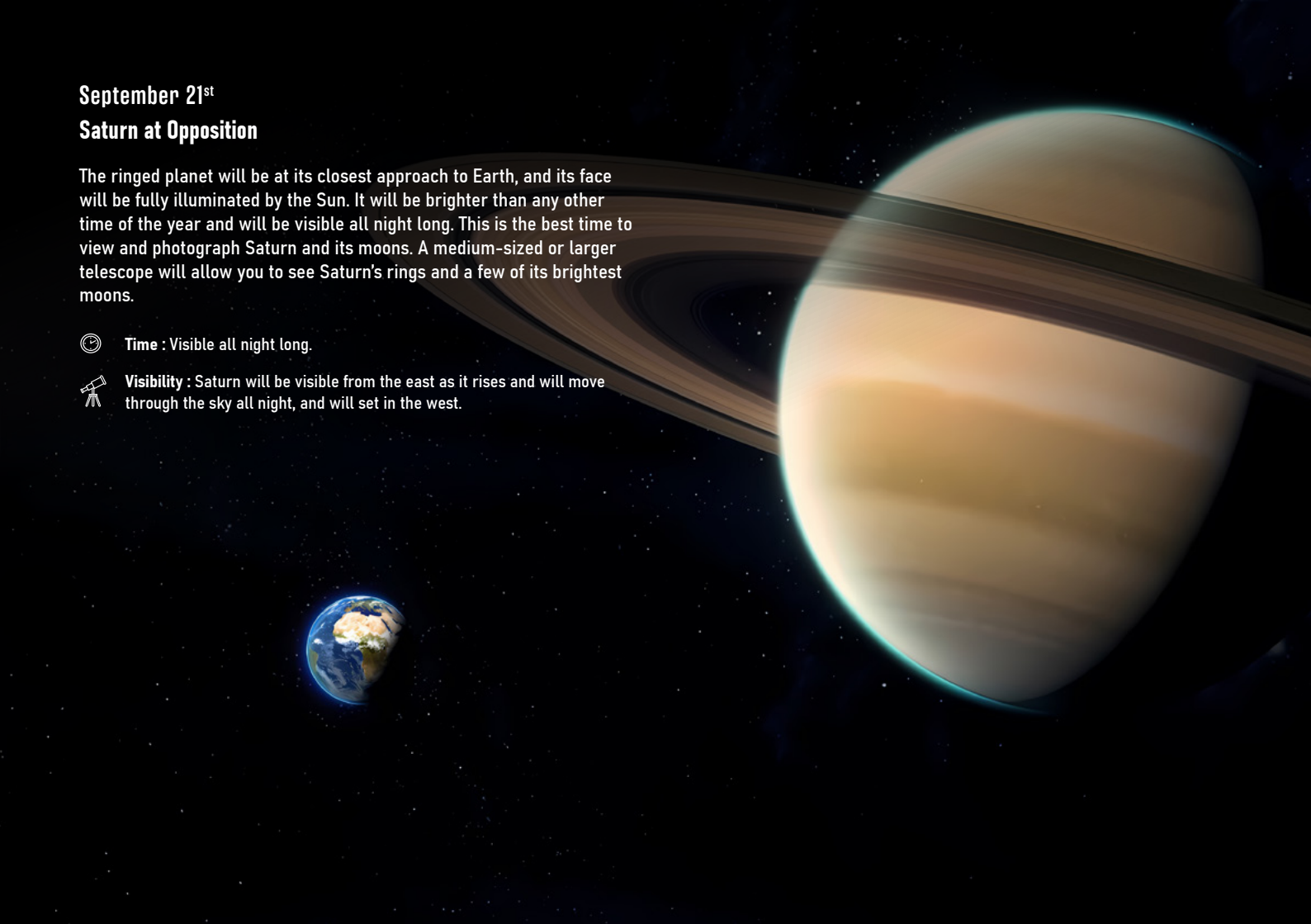
September 21st

Saturn at Opposition

The ringed planet will be at its closest approach to Earth, and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. It will be brighter than any other time of the year and will be visible all night long. This is the best time to view and photograph Saturn and its moons. A medium-sized or larger telescope will allow you to see Saturn's rings and a few of its brightest moons.

Time : Visible all night long.

Visibility : Saturn will be visible from the east as it rises and will move through the sky all night, and will set in the west.



October

2025

October 7th

Supermoon (Full Moon)

The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun, and its face will be fully illuminated. This moon was known by early native American tribes as the Hunter's Moon because at this time of year, the leaves are falling and the game is fat and ready to hunt. This is also the first of three supermoons for 2025. It will be 6.6% bigger and 13% brighter than a regular Full Moon.

Time : Visible from 19:00 EAT.

Visibility : The Moon will be visible from the east as it rises and will move through the sky all night, and will set in the west.

October 21st - 22nd

Orionids Meteor Shower

The Orionids is an average shower producing up to 20 meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by dust grains left behind by Comet Halley, which has been known and observed since ancient times.

The shower peaks this year on the night of October 21st and the morning of October 22th. The moon will be absent all night long, leaving dark skies for what should be an excellent show this year!

Time : Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight.

Visibility : Meteors will radiate from the constellation Orion, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

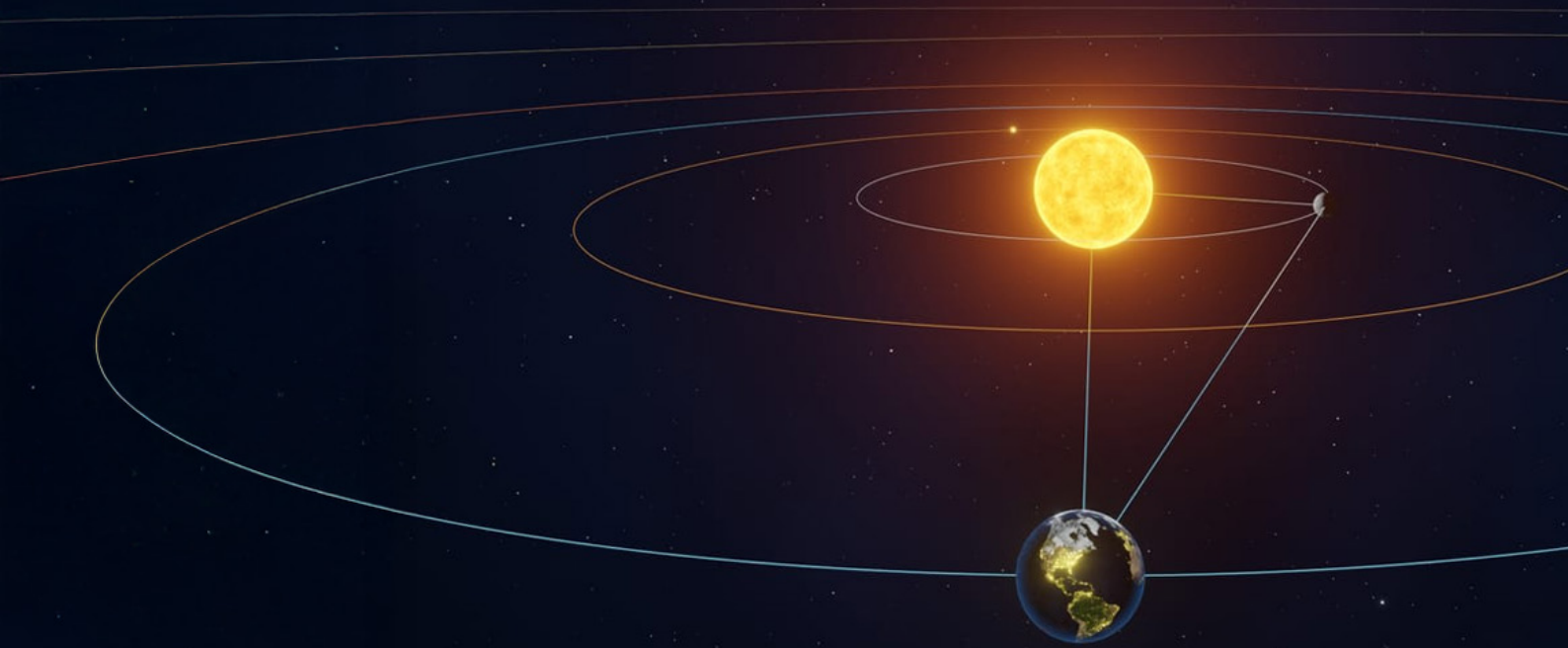
October 21st - 22nd

Mercury at Greatest Eastern Elongation

The planet Mercury reaches its greatest eastern elongation of 23.9 degrees from the Sun. This is the best time to view Mercury since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the evening sky.

Time : Best viewing in the evening.

Visibility : Look for the planet low in the western sky just after sunset.



November

2025

November 5th

Supermoon (Full Moon)

The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun and its face will be fully illuminated. This moon was known by early native American tribes as the Beaver Moon because this was the time of year to set the beaver traps before the swamps and rivers froze. It has also been known as the Frosty Moon and the Dark Moon.

This Full Moon will also be the biggest and brightest Supermoon of the year (7.9% bigger and 16% brighter than a regular Full Moon).

Time : Visible from 19:00 EAT.

Visibility : The Moon will be visible from the east as it rises and will move through the sky all night, and will set in the west.

November 17th - 18th

Leonids Meteor Shower

The Leonids is a moderate meteor shower, with up to 15 meteors per hour at its peak. Every 33 years, it has a rare cyclonic peak where hundreds of meteors can appear per hour, the last one was in 2001, and the next is expected in 2034. The shower comes from dust left by comet TempelTuttle, discovered in 1865. This year, it peaks on the night of the 17th and early morning of the 18th. A thin crescent moon means the skies will be dark, making for ideal viewing conditions.

Time : Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight.

Visibility : Meteors will radiate from the constellation Orion, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

December

2025

December 4th

Supermoon (Full Moon)

The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun, and its face will be fully illuminated. This moon was known by early native American tribes as the Cold Moon because this is the time of year when the cold winter air settles in and the nights become long and dark. It has also been known as the Long Nights Moon and the Moon Before Yule. This is also the last of three supermoons for 2025.

It will be 7.9% bigger and 15% brighter than a regular full moon.

Time : Visible from 19:00 EAT.

Visibility : The Moon will be visible from the east as it rises and will move through the sky all night, and will set in the west.

December 13th - 14th

Geminids Meteor Shower

The Geminids is the king of the meteor showers. It is considered by many to be the best shower, producing up to 120 multicolored meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by debris left behind by an asteroid known as 3200 Phaethon, which was discovered in 1982. The shower peaks this year on the night of the 13th and morning of the 14th. Viewing conditions are favourable as the Moon is in the waning crescent phase.

Time : Visible from 19:00 EAT.

Visibility : Meteors will radiate from the constellation Gemini, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

December 20th
New Moon

The whole night will be moon free.


2026

January 3rd

Full Moon (Wolf Moon)

The Moon will be fully illuminated, rising in the east at sunset and setting in the west at sunrise. This moon is also known as the Wolf Moon.

Time : Moonrise at approximately 18:59 EAT

Visibility : The Moon will be visible from the east as it rises and will move through the sky all night, and will set in the west.

January 3rd - 4th

Quadrantids Meteor Shower

The Quadrantids are a brief but intense meteor shower, active from December 28th, 2025 to January 12th, 2026, peaking around January 3rd–4th. The peak occurs on the night of January 3rd–4th, but unfortunately, a full moon on January 3rd will significantly hinder visibility due to its brightness.

Time : Best viewing after midnight

Visibility : Meteors will radiate from the constellation Boötes but can appear anywhere in the sky.

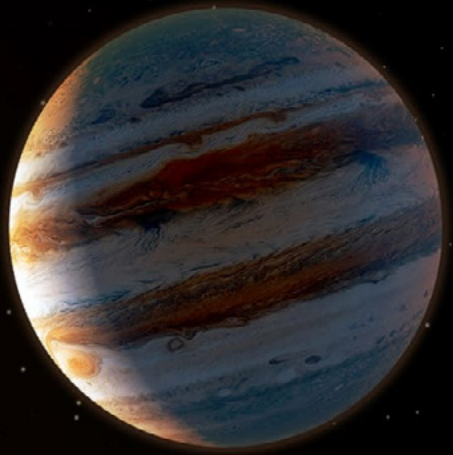
January 10th

Jupiter at Opposition

The giant planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. It will be brighter than any other time of the year and will be visible all night long. This is the best time to view and photograph Jupiter and its moons.

Time : Occurs at 11:34 EAT

Visibility : It will be brighter than any other time of the year and will be visible all night long.



February

2026

February 1st

Full Moon (Snow Moon)

The Snow Moon, traditionally named for the heavy snows of February, will be fully illuminated. This is a striking full moon, often appearing large and bright in the sky.

Time : Evening from 19:00 EAT.

Visibility : Rises in the east; full view all night.

February 17th

New Moon

The whole night will be moon free.

March

2026

March 3rd

Full Moon

This will be a striking full moon, appearing large and bright in the sky.

Time : Maximum eclipse at 05:33 EAT

Visibility : Visible during the early morning hours.

March 20th

March Equinox

This marks the beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere and autumn in the southern hemisphere. Perfect time for meditation and yoga session.

April

2026

April 2nd

Full Moon

The Moon is fully illuminated, offering excellent viewing and photographic opportunities of the lunar surface.

Time : Evening from 19:00 EAT.

Visibility : Rises in the east; full view all night.

April 17th

New Moon

The whole night will be moon free.

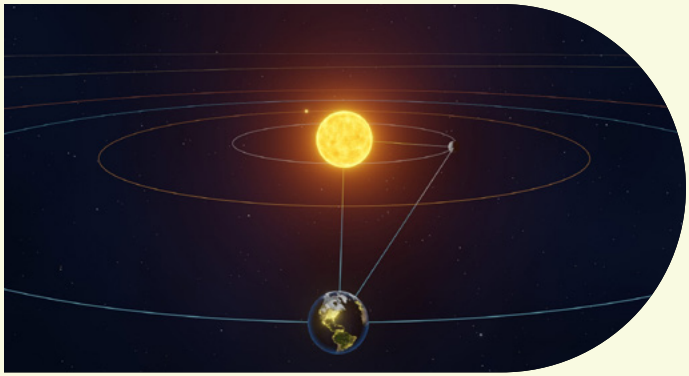
April 20th - 21st

Mercury at Greatest Western Elongation

Mercury reaches its greatest western elongation, the best time to observe this planet in the morning sky before sunrise.

Time : Early morning before dawn.

Visibility : The phenomenon will be visible towards the east.



April 22nd

Conjunction of the Moon and Jupiter

Moon and jupiter conjunction occurs when the moon passes close to bright Jupiter, creating a striking visual pairing in the sky that is ideal for viewing with the naked eye.

Time : Early morning before dawn

Visibility : The phenomenon will be visible towards the west.

April 25th
Triple Conjunction

A beautiful grouping of the crescent Moon along with Venus and Saturn low in the eastern morning sky before sunrise. While binoculars can enhance the view, it is also visible to the naked eye.

Time : Early morning before dawn in the east.

May

2026

May 6th - 7th

Eta Aquarids Meteor Shower

The Eta Aquarids is an above-average shower, capable of producing up to 60 meteors per hour at its peak. The shower runs annually from April 19th to May 28th. It peaks this year on the night of May 6 and the morning of May 7th. The showers are produced by dust particles left behind by Comet Halley, which has been observed since ancient times.

Time : The best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight, a few hours before dawn.

Visibility : Meteors will radiate from the constellation Aquarius, but can appear anywhere in the sky. The waning gibbous (illuminated at 72%) moon will block out some of the fainter meteors this year but with patience, one might catch the brighter ones.

May 17th

New Moon

The whole night will be moon free.

May 31st

Full Moon (The Blue Moon)

The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun and its face will be will be fully illuminated. This phase occurs at 11:46 EAT. Since this is the second full moon in the same month, it is sometimes referred to as a blue moon.

This rare calendar event only occurs once every few years, giving rise to the term “once in a blue moon”.

Time : 11.45 EAT.

Visibility : After sunset

June

2026

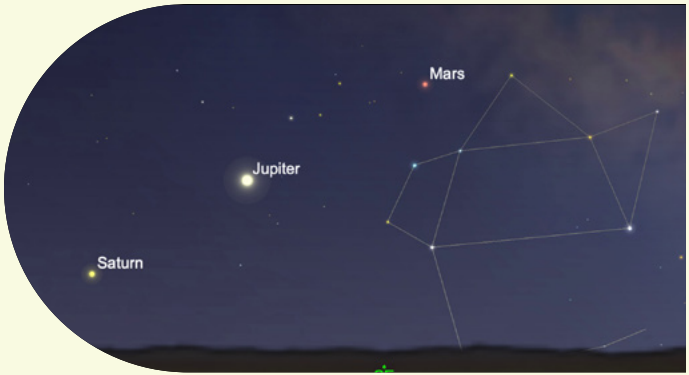
June 1st

Jupiter in Western Evening Sky

Jupiter shines prominently in the early evening but sets early, limiting observation to before 22:00 EAT.

Time : Evening from 19:00 before 22:00 EAT

Visibility : Rises in the east.



June 6th - 9th

Close Approach of Mecury and Jupiter

Mercury and Jupiter appear close together low in the western sky shortly after sunset, a rare and interesting planetary pairing.

Time : Just after sunset, with setting before 22:00 EAT.

Visibility : Visible in the western sky.

June 15th
New Moon

The whole night will be moon free.

June 30th

Full Moon - Strawberry Moon

The Strawberry Moon will be visible after sunset. It is named for the strawberry harvest season, not because of its color.

Time : Visible from 20:00 EAT

July

2026

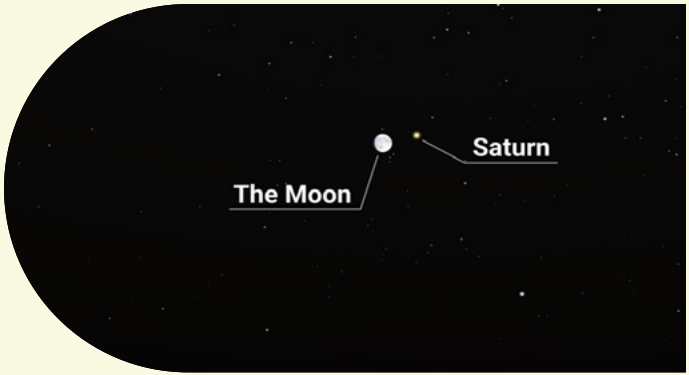
July 7th

Moon & Saturn Conjunction

Moon and Saturn conjunction occurs when the Moon passes near Saturn, offering a beautiful view in the twilight sky, best appreciated with binoculars.

Time : Evening from 19:32 EAT.

Visibility : The phenomenon will be visible towards the east.



July 11th

Moon Near Pleiades

The moon will be located close to the Pleiades star cluster.

Time : 02:17 EAT.

Visibility : View it high in the eastern sky in the constellation Taurus.

July 11th
Moon Near Mars

The Moon will appear close to Mars.

Time : Between 16:24 and 17:40 EAT.

Visibility : Low in the western sky before sunset.

August

2026

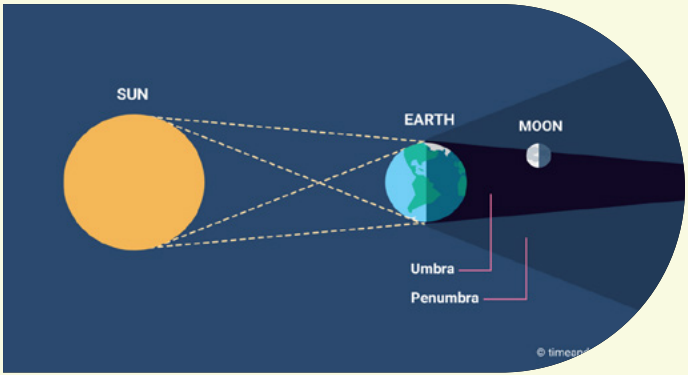
August 12th - 13th

Perseids Meteor Shower

The Perseids are among the most spectacular meteor showers, producing up to 60 meteors per hour at their peak. They originate from debris left by Comet Swift-Tuttle, discovered in 1862, and are renowned for their abundance of bright meteors. This year, the waning crescent moon will provide dark skies, making it ideal to catch the brightest meteors during the peak.

Time : Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. The waning crescent moon is favorable to spot the brightest meteors this year.

Visibility : Meteors will radiate from the constellation Perseus, but can appear anywhere in the sky.



August 28th

Partial Lunar Eclipse

The Moon will move into earth's shadow, with about 93% of it covered at the darkest point of the eclipse.

Time : Maximum eclipse at 19:14 EAT.

Visibility : Low in the western sky before setting; binoculars will enhance the view of the shadow crossing.

September

2026

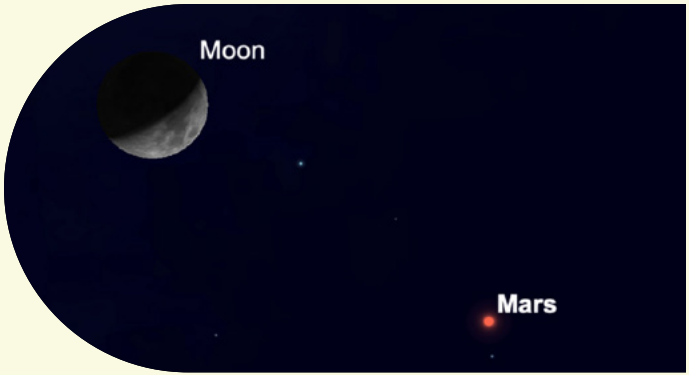
September 6th

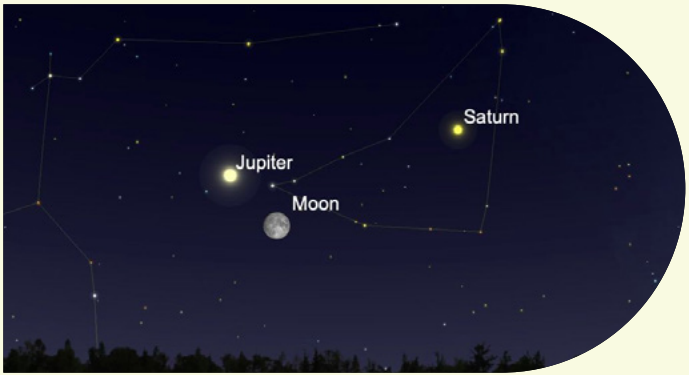
Moon Near Mars

The Moon will be close to Mars in the pre-dawn sky, creating a bright pairing in the constellation Gemini.

Time : Best viewed from around 04:30 – 05:30 EAT, before sunrise.

Visibility : Visible in the eastern sky along the ecliptic plane; naked-eye visible, with binoculars enhancing the view.





September 8th

Moon Near Jupiter

The waning crescent Moon will be close to bright Jupiter in the early morning sky.

Time : Visible from around 03:30 EAT until dawn.

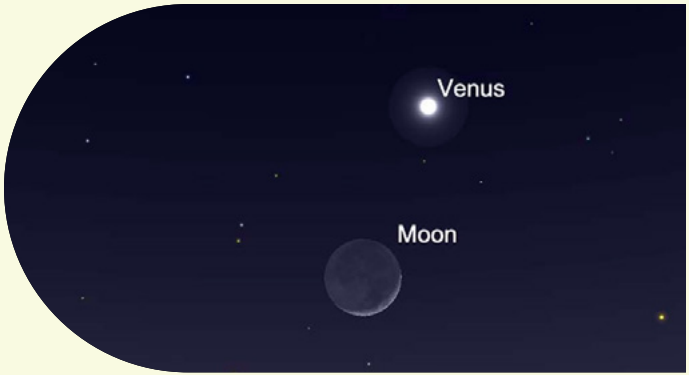
September 14th

Moon Near Venus

A waxing crescent Moon will appear near Venus in the evening sky, low in the horizon.

Time : Around 20:45 EAT.

Visibility : After sunset.



September 28th

Moon Near Saturn

The waxing gibbous Moon will be near bright Saturn in the evening sky.

Time : High in the east after sunset.

October

2026

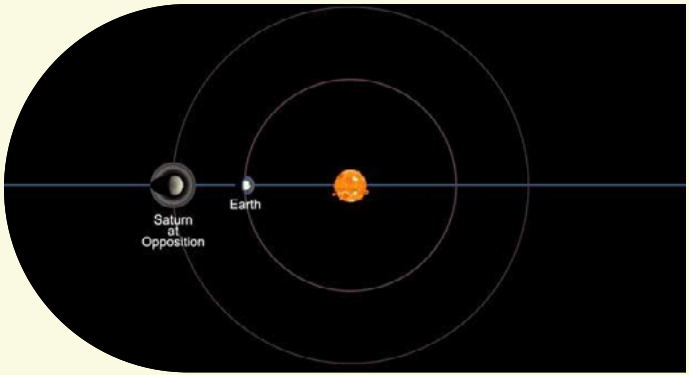
October 4th

Saturn at Opposition

Saturn at Opposition occurs when Earth passes directly between Saturn and the Sun, placing the planet at its brightest. Its iconic rings will be beautifully visible through a telescope.

Time : All night (Approximately 19:00 - 04:00 EAT). Will reach highest point in the sky at 23:31 EAT

Visibility : Will rise low above the eastern horizon, highest point above southern horizon and set above the western horizon. Can be seen with the naked eye but to see the rings, a telescope is required.



October 21st

Orionid Meteor Shower

This is caused by Earth passing through a trail of debris left by Comet Halley, producing bright shooting stars as the particles burn in our atmosphere. Active from October 2nd to November 7th, with peak activity on October 21st.

Time : 23:00 - 05:00 EAT each night.

Visibility : Radiant point (the area of the sky from which the meteors appear to originate) will be over the eastern horizon towards the constellation Orion. The number of meteors visible will be affected by the moon (especially when it's full).

November

2026

November 18th

Leonid Meteor Shower

This occurs as Earth travels through a stream of debris from Comet 55P/Tempel-Tuttle, creating fast, bright meteors that streak across the night sky. Active from November 6th to 30th, with peak activity around November 18th .

Time : 01:00 - 05:00 EAT each night.

Visibility : Radiant point will be above the eastern horizon towards the constellation Leo. The number of meteors visible will be affected by the moon (especially when it's full).

December

2026

December 14th

Geminid Meteor Shower

This is produced when Earth crosses the debris trail of asteroid 3200 Phaethon, known for its bright and colorful meteors. Active from December 4th to 17th, with peak activity around December 14th .

Time : 20:30 - 05:00 EAT each night.

Visibility : Radiant point will be above the eastern horizon towards the constellation Gemini.

KENYA

Peponi Plaza, Mwanzi Road

P.O. Box 72630, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254 20 375 0235 / +254 20 361 6000

TANZANIA

99 Serengeti Road, Sopa Plaza

P.O. Box 1823, Arusha, Tanzania

Tel: +255 784 250 630 / +255 754 250 630

Email: reservations@sopalodges.co.ke / reservations@sopalodges.com

www.sopalodges.com

SOPA LODGES

Astronomical Calendar

JULY 2025 - DECEMBER 2026

A guide to the night sky